THE Harbinger of Light.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL
DEVOTED TO
ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"*Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day.*"

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The general topic of conversation in connection with Spiritualism during the last month, and what promises to be a cause celebrè in the annals of Spiritualism is the trial for conspiracy and fraud of Dr. Henry Slade, and his agent Mr. Simmons, which at the time the last English mail left was proceeding at the Bow Street Police Court. Before any evidence of the result of the trial could be received, some of the newspapers had already condemned the defendants, the plaintiffs' statement being quite sufficient for them to moralise on the perfidy of the accused and the credulity of their dupes. The opponents of Spiritualism have eagerly fed upon the garbage presented to them, and are walking about with their mouths full of it, spitting it out on every Spiritualist who comes in their way. By one we are told that Dr. Slade writes the messages with a pencil in his finger nail, by another that he was caught writing it on his knee, by a third that the messages were written beforehand with chemical pencil, and then rubbed out to appear again at the proper time. Indeed! we say, where did you obtain your information? Oh! we saw it in the paper! the "Daily Telegraph" explained it all. We hint at the possibility of error, prejudice or misstatement on the part of that highly respectable journal, and are informed that the facts are corroborated by English papers. We presume we have a reputation for credulity among the strong minded anti-spiritualists, in this instance, however, we act the part of sceptic, and express our doubts that even English papers are immaculate, but desiring to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, we look carefully into the actual evidences *pro and con*, as far as the trial has gone, and purpose giving our readers a resumé of the case, and thereby enabling them to form a fair idea of it as it stands.

It appears that on the 12th of September last, Professor Barrett read a paper before the Anthropological department of the British Association at Glasgow, on Psychological Phenomena, the subsequent discussion of which drew together upwards of a thousand members. In the interim between the delivery of the paper and the discussion, Dr. Ray Lankester wrote a letter to the "Times," expressing his opinion that the Association was disgraced by permitting the paper to be introduced, reflecting disparagingly upon the Chairman, Mr. A. R. Wallace, and showing considerable animus against Spiritualism. Having a very decided opinion that spiritual phenomena generally, and Dr Slade's in particular, were produced by conjuring and sleight of hand, the strong minded professor of zoology accepted the advice of Mr. Cox, and made an appointment with Dr. Slade, not for the purpose of Investigation, but to find out how it was done. At his first visit he failed to unravel the mystery, but came away with the idea that the medium must write the messages himself, between the time the clean slate was examined by the visitors and its being placed under the table. He thereupon arranged with a friend, Dr. Donkin, to pay another visit to Slade, and seize the slate before the spirit message was supposed to be completed. If any writing was found upon it, it would be *prima facie* evidence to them (and ought to be to everyone else) of the correctness of their theory. Acting upon this idea, the confederates awaited their opportunity, and as soon as the slate was in position seized and withdrew it, finding on it some two or three words. Instead of asking for an explanation, the two gentlemen commenced to abuse the medium, Mr. Donkin making use of coarse adjectives, and after raising a stir in the anteroom (where they were too civilly treated by Mr. Simmons), took their departure, and a few days afterwards procured summonses against Dr. Slade and Mr. Simmons, for conspiracy to defraud, including without authority the names of Dr. Carpenter and Mr. Sidgwick, as parties to the prosecution, a proceeding which these gentlemen most decidedly objected to. The examination was commenced before Mr. Flowers P.M., on Monday, October 2nd, and continued on the 9th, when it was further adjourned until the 20th. We have perused the verbatim account of the trial which appears in the London "Daily Telegraph," and as far as it has proceeded the evidence has not disclosed any dishonest or

fraudulent act on the part of the defendants. Mr. Lankester did not see Dr. Slade write the message, and in cross-examination admitted that writing occurred, and his person was touched whilst Slade's hands were both on the table. In fact, as far as can be seen from the evidence published, there is nothing but the theory propounded by the prosecutor to support his case. Mr. J. N. Maskelyne was produced in court, and created some amusement by writing on a slate with a small instrument, worn on the end of the finger, which by means of a piece of elastic would when desired disappear up the arm. All the evidence so far has been for the prosecution, for the defence a large array of witnesses are available, but from an intimation given by the magistrate it is probable the defendants will not be allowed to call them all, we may however, anticipate to some extent the nature of the testimony which will be forthcoming if admitted, on behalf of Dr. Slade, by a few extracts from various letters published in the London papers, facts already testified to by credible witnesses which should be adequate in themselves to destroy the tenability of the plaintiffs' theory. The first to which we shall call attention is that of Professor Barrett, who states that he observed the peculiar twitching and convulsive movements of the medium, alluded to by Dr. Lankester, and thought them suspicious, but instead of snatching the slate away as that gentleman had done, he adopted a more straightforward and rational course, as follows:—

"Taking a slate clean on both sides, I placed it on the table so that it rested above, although its surface could not touch a fragment of the slate pencil. In this position I held the slate firmly down with my elbow; one of Slade's hands was then grasped by mine, and the tips of the fingers of his other hand barely touched the slate. While closely watching both of Slade's hands, which did not move perceptibly, I certainly was much astonished to hear scratching going on apparently on the other side of the table, and when the slate was lifted up, I found the side facing the table covered with writing. A similar result was obtained on other days; further, an eminent scientific friend obtained writing on a clean slate when it was held entirely in his own hand, both of Slade's being on the table."

Mr. Conrad W. Cooke, Telegraphic Engineer, visited Dr. Slade in company with a "Professor," whose name is suppressed, and we extract the following from his report:—

The "grain" of slate pencil was then placed on the table and covered by the slate, upon which Dr. Slade placed the palm of his left hand, his other hand being above the table and touching ours. The sound of the writing immediately commenced, and continued for several minutes, only stopping whenever any of us lifted a hand so as to "break the chain," as Dr. Slade expressed it. When the slate was turned up, it was perfectly covered with small, clear writing, a sort of essay upon the beneficial and harmless nature of Spiritualism, which it called by that name, and finishing up with the signature "*A. F. Slade.*" While this was going on, what felt very much like a hand grasped my right knee, which was quite beyond the reach of Dr. Slade's foot, and both his hands were above the table. A few minutes afterwards, Professor ——'s chair was pulled partly from under him, and Dr. Slade declared that he could see a hand taking hold of the back of it, but neither the Professor nor myself could see anything of the sort.

Professor —— then requested to be allowed to hold the slate himself. A grain of slate pencil was placed on the slate, which he held under the flap of the table, and pressing it up against it. In a moment the writing commenced, and a word or two was written on the slate. During the experiment both Dr. Slade's hands were above the table. A few minutes after, when the slate was held under the table, the following words were written;— "Good-bye, I cannot do any more," and after that no more writing or raps were produced, and we came away.

Dr. Blake, Alfred R. Wallace, C. C. Massey, and numerous other well-known men testify to similar experiences. Mr. John McIlwraith, of Melbourne, visited Dr. Slade, obtained writing on a slate held by himself alone, and was much pleased with the medium's straightforward and gentlemanly manner.

In a letter to the "Times," Mr. A. R. Wallace says:—

"As I have now shown that Professor Lankester commenced his letter with an erroneous statement of fact, and a "more than questionable" statement of opinion, it is not to be wondered at that I find the remainder of his communication equally unsatisfactory. His account of what happened during his visit to Dr. Slade is so completely unlike what happened during my own visit, as well as the recorded experiences of Sergeant Cox, Mr. Carter Blake, and many others, that I can only look upon it as a striking example of Dr. Carpenter's theory of preconceived ideas."

Dr. Carter Blake in a letter to the "Times," speaks to the same effect after 23 examinations of the slate.

A San Francisco telegram announces that Dr. Slade is convicted and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour, but this requires authentication, and we are inclined to doubt its reliability, but whatever the result of the police court enquiry may be, it cannot in the judgement of any impartial person disturb the fact of his mediumship as testified to by so many intelligent and impartial witnesses, or alter the belief of those who have had occular demonstration of the remarkable phenomena which occurs in his presence.

COMMUNICATION

Received at a Melbourne Circle.

(It was indicated through the medium that there was a want of balance manifested in the circle, which rendered control a matter of some difficulty.)

Men view the earth, and matters relating to it, from different standpoints. These standpoints vary not only according to locality, but also in proportion to the different qualities of perception brought to bear on their realization.

Those who live in the wilds of the bush, and spend a free and careless—though withal a natural—existence in the arcadian simplicity of a country life; these view the earth from a very different standpoint from those who are ever being hustled in the crowd and shock of men.

The former are contented with their position, and generally aspire to no higher thoughts than those which have a direct bearing on their physical life. They love only that which is in harmony with their own particular stage of development, whether it be of a spiritual or purely animal nature. Bring such a one into the centre of civilization, poised, as it were, upon some topmost pinnacle, and let him see the densely crowded city spread like an ocean around him. What a confusion of ideas would strike him. How his intellect would seem to shrink into nothing. He stands aghast at such a state of life which is rich and enjoyable to many, and he would fain almost creep beneath the stones for shelter.

And what has all this to do with us? Can we gain a lesson by reflecting on these matters? Yes, by contrasting these two states in our minds, and comparing them to peace and discord.

Away up in the hills where you have lived since childhood, gathering the berries from the bush, playing with the children in the village; doing all this till grey hairs have crowned you with glory, can you remember any harsh words? Was not your life filled up with kindly sympathy for all? It was a scene of sylvan peace and quietness, but the echo of the battle's roar reached your happy glade. The young man was torn from your side to be a soldier; in a few short hours he, who was before all kindness and gentleness, has become an animal more dangerous than any which prowls in the forest. You have grown, as it were, in the centre of society, born in cities with high towers overlooking you, with paved streets crowded on every side of you. Society surrounds you, and does you homage, and all men smile upon you. You have your institutions of different kinds, many of them intended to help the needy and restore the sick.

Yet these very institutions are abused, and in this way. They afford scope for the hungry hunter after popularity, and are, as it were, so many ladders whereby

men gain a position to be regarded as the Scribes and Pharisees were in the olden time. They seem to say—"Look on us; we are holy and good."

It is true that benevolence is the first cause of the rise of these institutions in a country. (At this stage of the discourse, the harmony of the circle was disturbed by the presence of a barrel organ in the street. This valuable instrument, after playing one tune in a variety of ways, condescended to move on, and render its dulcet sounds more mellow by distance. The circle was on the point of resuming its wonted harmony, when some unruly youths loudly requested some pecuniary help to burn Guy Fawkes once more with all the honors. They were politely and suggestively told to move on by the President, who kindly intimated the direction. This they did hastily.)

On resuming,—

You must understand that there is a time when music is in place, and harmony has a delightful effect. It is for that reason we advise its use at the commencement of your sittings.

The minds of all are then influenced by the same strain, and the forces of the circle are equalized. But when the minds of the circle are in different degrees of activity, following the discourse and discussing, as it were, the words as they are given; it is then a different set of conditions, and the organs of the mind are disturbed by the organs in the street.

I was discoursing upon that institution which is rooted in the very basis of humanity. Upon it the mind is formed and modelled in its infancy, and it has a vast influence on the thoughts, words, and actions in after-life. To look for the germ which gives this feeling birth, you must search deep into that centre spirit of all—that which has passed away into the unfathomable spheres, kindling itself into a living form and expression showing itself in the simplest love and confidence of a child.

Budding in youth as truth, maturing itself in manhood as holiness of life and love to God and man, or embodied in the great principle of spiritual development.

In the foregoing I refer, of course, to that institution or feeling which is commonly called religion, which, though so beautiful and pure in its original conception, has become so distorted by the usages of modern times as to constitute itself one of the greatest evils of humanity.

It is impossible to uproot it, but it can be altered in such a manner as to benefit all the principles and feelings which spring therefrom.

Man—the material man—is the pedestal, the corner stone,—in fact, the whole edifice, and God is made but a pretext for man to set himself up and obtain homage, submission to his wealth, and the downfall of everything good and noble in humanity.

This is the parent of nine-tenths of the evils of your day. To read of all this in books is no use, you can see them stalking in the broad daylight with pomp and vanity. You can see them clothed in purple and fine linen, and gilded all round the brow with the words, "Holy, holy, holy."

To look at all this is no use. You must with will and earnest determination strike deep down at the very root of this evil which gives forth its poisons to all around. To do this is the work of man and woman.

Ten thousand foes will meet you, who, with frowning faces, and, I doubt not, more than that, will curse and swear at your impudence and infidelity, as they may think fit to call it.

There is no road or by-way by which the light can reach them but reason. Reason is the only means by which man can attain the highest possibility of the religious idea. Some speak of intuition. That is only good as a minor means. Man, by the act of reason, gathers truth or knowledge, and as he step by step reaches the highest possibility of his nature, he attains the nearest possibility to his godhead.

Challenge all by every means in your power to reason on matter as appertaining to religion.

Be not too anxious to show them what you believe to be true. Exhibit your light to them that they may use it to see the fallacy of their own doctrines.

Let those who have been teachers now receive their instruction; let them see the darkness of the errors with which they have clothed themselves.

Weigh each statement in the balance of that common sense which guides you all. Let the educated and the uneducated—let even the idiot—hear, and though he be an idiot, he will perceive the truth when presented to him.

You have means to scatter the truth; use them. Call them to the front, and upon your platforms and in your pulpits do as many have done before—fight for liberty, demand that which all are entitled to.

Most of those who take prominent parts in the institutions referred to do, so not for the sake of benefiting others, but rather to make a position for themselves.

There is one institution—and only one—that stands and will ever stand the test of close enquiry, because it is based on the broad principle of alleviating human suffering. I refer, of course, to hospitals. These are, no doubt, subject to abuses, but the fundamental principle is good, and such institutions will remain while humanity lives to suffer, or disease to work its terrible way.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

SPIRITUALISM IN TASMANIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I write to inform you that the principles of the Harmonial Philosophy are beginning to commend themselves in this quarter in a degree, though generally the old orthodox chain is too strong for most persons to escape from it. Your monthly messenger is looked forward to with a great deal of pleasure by our small circle, and its contents seem now to meet with much acceptance. We take in several religious periodicals, but I always find the *Harbinger* commands the most attention. This clearly proves there is a longing in the soul for what the current literature cannot supply. And if such a desire exist, to satisfy the same must be legitimate. True, there is nothing of Spiritualism that we can appropriate as yet but its philosophy, as we have been unable with all our application to obtain any physical manifestations. This, I can readily believe, may be owing to wrong conditions, which from want of knowledge we are unable to rectify. Yet, apart from this phase of the subject, the information which Spiritualism brings is sufficient when judged on its merits to stamp it as a science of the most exalted character. I decidedly approve of your leader treating of the difficulties encountered by "Truth-seeker," and think the advice the most judicious. People are much the same as they were 2,000 years ago, and are more given to hunting up signs and wonders than to test the truth. It would seem as though the human mind generally is incapable of investigating anything on its own merits, but must call in the aid of authority. This is to be deplored, as nearly all authority has vested interests to serve, which effectually prevent progression. It was said to Thomas by Jesus Christ, "Because thou hast seen thou hast believed; but I say, blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." This is mostly understood that those who are the most credulous with regard to the utterances from the pulpit are to be commended. I take it that the truths taught by Christ were to be approved of for their own sake, and their celestial origin determined from the intrinsic value they possessed, instead of receiving any importance from outward signs. To speak plainly, Jesus might have said, "Thomas, you are a physical man, you occupy a material plane, and therefore your gross instincts will not allow you to appropriate the sublime theories that I have enunciated, unless they be accompanied by ponderable demonstrations. I would rather have you judge of what is good in itself, than because it is recommended by another." On the same principle, there are some children

who only know twice two to be four from the force of authority, rather than from the inherent condition of the law of numbers.

Just now the religious mind is in a state of commotion in Tasmania, consequent on the publication in the *Christian Witness* of certain lectures delivered in Hobart Town by the Rev. Mr. Bird, Congregational Minister. The first lecture treated of Adam and Eve and their surroundings, according to the Mosaic narrative, which he explained to be allegorical, and other themes were similarly disposed of. In the last lecture, Mr. Bird advocated progression in a future life, and this seems to be the culminating point of his offence. Some are dissatisfied with the *Witness* for publishing such heresies, while others advocate writing the lecturer into oblivion. I observe that many of the Spiritualists' ideas are finding their way into orthodox pulpits, though the source from which they are derived is not recognised.

As you have kindly promised to submit any questions of general interest to your circle for solution, I append the following:—

No. 1. When solid bodies are introduced by spirits, through walls and other substantial impediments, are the things so conveyed de-materialised for the occasion, and made afterwards to cohere when the destination is reached; or is it the obstructions themselves that become dissolved for the time? The first supposition would be difficult to apply to living birds, &c.

No. 2. In mental mediumship is there any way of judging whether the thoughts emanate from one's own brain, or are produced by spirit influence?

No. 3. Is the brain the vehicle only for receiving thoughts and impressions from the spirit-world, or is it capable of evolving ideas by its own native energy?

Yours, truly,

5th November, 1876. TASMANIA.

[Answers in next issue.—Ed. *H. of Lt.*]

THE SABBATH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—I have read with interest the paper in your last number, "Layman." His remarks on "the Lord's Day," or "Day of the Lord," are quite correct. That term very frequently occurs both in the Old and New Testament; and refers to the period, a vision of which is said to have passed before John, called "the Great Tribulation," "the Great Day of Wrath," "the Day of Vengeance," &c, which it is said, was immediately to precede the setting up of the Kingdom of Heaven;* when "the Son of Man will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and them that do iniquity;" and is described in "the Seven Seals," the sounding of the "Seven Trumpets," and the "Seven last woes;" as also in the xviii. and xix. chapters of the Book of Revelation, *but is never applied to the Sabbath Day in the Scriptures.*

The Day of the Lord is quoted twenty-two times in the Old Testament, seven times in the New, and often under other terms. It was used by the Prophets, by Jesus, and by his Apostles, as a means of inducing men "to repent" (as the clergy use hell fire in our days. They were taught to believe that "the Great Day of the Lord is near, and hasteneth greatly,"† and to watch, for they "knew neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."‡ "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come, and it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."||

My object in referring to this subject is that I WISH TO DEMONSTRATE BY SCIENTIFIC FACTS THAT THE ORIGINAL SABBATH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (which Intolerant Sabbatarians insist upon imposing upon us) *is a pious fraud,* totally destitute of evidence, and opposed to many of the facts and laws of Nature, the teaching of which must have a very demoralizing influence upon our youth, who are taught from their school books, from scientific lectures, from the coal they see burning on the fires, from the histories of Egypt, India, China, &c., that the Creation as described by Moses, with its Sabbath, and the age of the World, as determined by its chronology are the same, which is utterly untenable and untrue.

A pretty example on the part of our clergy to set before the rising generation, to promulgate lies to them from their pulpits, in the name of the God of Truth! But I shall reserve this proof for another paper.

I am, Sir, &c.,

R.

* Rev. xi., 15; xiv., 14—20. Matth. xiii., 37—43; Matth. xxiv., 29—42.

† Zeph. i., 14—18. ‡ || Acts ii., 20, 37.

"LAYMAN" IN REPLY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—A letter appeared in your issue of last month from the pen of Mr. J. Teague, entitled a challenge addressed to Layman, who is asked to disclose his name that test basis arrangements may be entered upon; when J. T. imagines he will have no difficulty in showing the system Layman seeks to destroy rests not on dreams &c., but the solid rock of knowledge—without naming for the benefit of Truthseekers where this rock is to be found.

Layman would have no objection to comply with this imperative, and in some instances just demand, if he could see a probability of both sides of the question being discussed in a temperate manner, without which no good result would be obtained, but from the spirit manifested in the challenge, Layman is of opinion this desirable requisite is not to be expected, he is too well aware of the persecuting instincts of the orthodox—that they are generally bitter, dishonest, and unscrupulous in the manner they adopt to put down a freethinking opponent, and as J. T. has already shown himself to be one of this class, he must, at least for the present be content with Layman's name being withheld. It is doubtless for this reason anonymous writing is so much in vogue at the present day in most of the daily and weekly publications the "Spectator and Methodist Chronicle" included. So that it should not be considered unreasonable in Layman exercising a like privilege. Have we not a specimen of J. T.'s uncharitableness, where he says Layman may be him, whose business it is to walk up and down in the earth and to go to and fro in it, trembling—representing that he, Layman, may be that evil spirit spoken of in the book of Job, ch. 1., ver 7—the word trembling is not in the text, and J. T. is quite mistaken in applying it to Layman, who recollects reading some time ago of a clergyman who preached from 1st Peter, 5 ch. and 8 ver. (a parallel passage) "The devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour." He divided the subject of his discourse into four heads, thus—firstly, we shall endeavour to ascertain 'Who the Devil was;' secondly, we shall inquire into his geographical position, namely: 'where the Devil was,' and 'where the Devil was going;' thirdly—And this of a personal character—'Who the Devil was seeking? And fourthly and lastly, we shall endeavour to solve a question which has never been solved yet, 'what the Devil was roaring about?'

Had J. T. read with any degree of attention Layman's reply to the Rev. J. G. Millard's dream, he would have seen that there is no claim laid as to having discovered any new weapon with which to cut down Christianity, the book on which Christianity is founded is simply left to speak for itself.

Layman read in the "Spectator and Methodist Chronicle" of October 21st, where Nelson on the morning of Trafalgar, was remonstrated with that the decorations upon his coat would attract the attention of the enemy's marksmen, he proudly answered, "in honour I have won them and in honour I will wear them," it turns out (on the authority of Captain Hardy) that these words were never uttered by Nelson at all—the words he used were "This is not a time to talk of changing coats." It turns out also, that the words attributed to the Duke of Wellington at the crisis of Waterloo—"Up, guards and at them,"—were never uttered. How difficult it is to find veritable and veracious history? Sacred or profane!

J. T. may have noticed in the "M. A. Mail" of 30th November, that Mr. A. A. Ascott, one of the speakers at

a meeting of the Wesleyan local preachers association, said he sympathised with advanced thought, and believed in the gradual unfolding of truth which is not to be found in any system of Theology, he had no sympathy with the vulgar denunciation of advanced thinkers as bad men, and of their works as trash.

J. T. may not have seen anything in newspapers so strong as the remarks that were made on the clerical profession by a late member of it, as appeared in the "Leader" of 28th October. This gentleman after many years practical experience as a clergyman, and after having studied carefully to fit himself for the position, found it impossible with satisfaction to himself to continue his connection with his church—one of the most influential in Victoria. A friend recently addressed this gentleman as "Reverend" when writing to him, forgetting that he had renounced the title for some time. An answer came to the following effect:—In your last you addressed me as "Reverend." For God's sake don't insult me again. Don't you know that I have left the bosom of Holy Church, and that I am proud of my departure? I left the glorious mockery that for so many years had deceived me, when my eyes were opened at last to its miserable hypocrisy and meanness . . . . I have been in the inner sanctuary of churches—know what they are—know how religion is professed, carefully observed and made into an elegant trade; and my verdict is sham, sham—pitiful, mean, hypocritical sham—only worthy of being swept out to the great dung-hill of creation's off scourings with the broom of utter contempt! The mild passages from this gentleman's letter are selected only; his strong ones I really would not like to publish. But when a gentleman who but lately had people "sitting under him" whom he was in the habit of addressing as "beloved brethren," writes in this manner, could anything be too strong for unregenerate laymen?

Another reverend gentleman who had been a number of years in the church, when at the point of death, asked pardon of God, and his parishioners, for having taught the doctrines of Christianity; but I must not take up any more of your valuable space with extracts.

Not with an unobservant eye, Mr. Editor, has Layman mingled with ministers of various denominations; and the experience of nearly half a century warrants him in saying, that ministers are but men; and the best of men, but men, at the best; and in every denomination with which Layman is acquainted. He has seen some ministers grasping more eagerly after wealth and secular power, than ardently striving to instruct the ignorant, than sedulously comforting the distressed, than anxiously leading sinners to repentance! Therefore, Layman is not surprised at witnessing the overbearing spirit exhibited at the Wesleyan Conference, and at every other assembly of Priests, Parsons, and Preachers.

In this era of inquiry stereotyped interpretations of Scripture are insufferable, unless conformable to the tenor of Scripture; for, Reason, and Science, and Scholarship are blowing away the mists of credulity and ignorance, scattering to the winds the dust of antiquated formulas. The people are now, thank heaven, resolutely bent on getting rid of "the wisdom of their ancestors," demanding something more mentally nutricious than the dry bones of bygone dispensations and the sawdust of antiquated systems of belief; they are crying for bread. Mr. Editor, and heaven be praised they will no longer be satisfied with stones to eat.

Now, in conclusion, if J. T. will condescend to reply to any of the letters Layman has already written, or may yet write to the "Harbinger." He will feel greatly obliged; and promises to bestow on same a most attentive perusal, or should J. T. insert anything expressing his views and requiring an answer from Layman, it shall have his prompt and best attention.

You are aware, Mr. Editor, that Layman sent you a letter dated 16th October, for insertion in the "Harbinger" for November, but which was unavoidably held over till 1st December. He could not therefore expect you to insert two of his letters in the same journal or this one would have been written a month earlier.

LAYMAN.

Vaughan, December 18th 1876.

PERSECUTION.

A Lay-Sermon read by H. K. Rusden, at the Masonic Hall, Melbourne, before the Melbourne Spiritualist and Freethought Association, on Sunday, the 8th October, 1876.

——o——

You will find it (with slight adaptation to the circumstances of the day) thus written in the xviii chapter of the gospel according to St. John, and in the 33rd to the 36th verses.

33. Then [Prince Bismark] entered into the judgment hall again, and called [the Roman priesthood] and said unto [it,] Art thou the King of the [Prussians]?

34. [The Roman priesthood] answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

35. [Bismark] answered, Am I a [Roman Catholic]? [The conflicting claims of] thine own nation and [of thy foreign] chief priest have [brought thee into this scrape]. What has thou done?

36. [The Roman priesthood did NOT answer like Jesus]—"My Kingdom is *not of this world*; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my [Deity] fight, "that I should not be delivered to the [Prussians]. "But now is my kingdom not from hence."

On the contrary the Roman Catholic clergy exclaim, You are persecuting us! Your kingdom is only a province of the Pope's Kingdom, which *is* of this world. They forget that what the Lord gave [to the Pope], the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

You will, also, find it in like manner thus written in the 13th chaper of St. Paul's Epistle to the *Romans* at the 1st and following verses.

1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God. (Bismark's not excepted.)

2. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves—Damnation!

3. For Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.

4, For [Bismark] is the minister [of State] to thee for good [paying thee £150,000 a-year for considerably less than nothing]. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the Minister of [the Emperor of Prussia] to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but, also, for conscience sake.

6. For for this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are [State] Ministers attending continually upon this very thing.

7. Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

I like to refute a man out of his own mouth.

It appears to me that if we do not learn wisdom from current events, we shall never learn it at all; and that we should fail in our duty, and lose the good of our life, were we to allow important events to pass without exercising upon them our best moral judgment, and drawing from them in *free discussion* the greatest possible good. Our lives would be worthless to the world, and the events of the world would be worthless to us, were we not to endeavour to apprehend them accurately, digest them profitably—and reflect upon Society the greatest benefit that we can derive from their consideration. Pre-eminently the best way of doing this—is by "*Free Discussion.*"

Now, many lessons are to be learnt from the so-called *persecution* of the Holy Roman priesthood in Prussia. It forms a forcible illustration of the fact, that if men are easily blinded by their individual narrow self-interest to the claims of others—individually or collectively; if their judgment can be readily warped by personal association, or by the ties of kindred or nationality; yet there is no class of events so intoxicating to the imagination,—so falsifying to the reason, or

so hardening to the heart, as those in which religious considerations predominate.

This is mainly because the pernicious inculcation of speculative theories as final truth upon the plastic minds of infants, identifies those theories with their feelings and personal egotism so completely and permanently; that in relation to them—inherent unreasonableness appears logical, absurdity appears simply a test of faith; and crime becomes a designation, not of what is injurious to Society, but rather of whatever may tend to expose delusion, or substitute knowledge for ignorance, or fact for fiction. Doctrines are called sacred, and contradictions denominated mysteries, discussion and investigation of which would be dangerous to priestcraft. What the priest desires to be done, is—in conformity with his teaching—called good, however really immoral it may be; and the best of actions—if not in the apparent interest of religion—are characterised as wicked and worthy only of damnation.

Of course any attempt to teach such folly to the wise and prudent would meet with deserved contempt. It is *therefore* carefully revealed solely to *babes* of all ages, who are incapable of discriminating good from evil, or of discerning in the professed anxiety to save others from fictitious evils magnified to infinity, nothing but the cunning of interested priestcraft. All sense of innocence and rectitude, all self-reliance and resolution, and all hope of possible improvement, are annihilated by the doctrine that men are born naturally depraved, incapable of good, and dependent for salvation and strength upon imaginary divine grace, which for any reasons may be withheld, however highly the priest may be feed to secure it. Further intimidation is effected by depicting an almighty tyrant of the Universe to whom it affords pleasure to torture eternally—beings constructed by him for the purpose—sensitive to pain; and from whose rage the priest professes to be alone able to save. The general direct tendency of this deliberate abuse of the minds of young children, is to enormously increase the number of the weakminded and immoral, and to keep them in complete subserviency to the tyranny of the priest. Just as men in general call good—that which benefits *them*, however destructive it may be for other organised beings;—as they slaughter not only fleas, rats, and snakes, but, also, sheep and cattle, and call the result *good* regardless of the evil to the poor animals they destroy; so the priest teaches to unsuspecting children that everything that tends to his aggrandisement is good *per se*, and holy, and that everything that tends to the real enlightnement of the people—is wicked and bad. Ordinary human beings are satisfied to eat their beef and mutton without demanding that the poor sheep and cattle shall be forced to admit the *goodness* of the arrangement; but the priest demands of the victims upon whom HE feeds and fattens, not only a confession of the propriety of his doing so, but a general positive assertion, also, that nothing is good which does not tend to their own enthralment, and to his advantages; and that everything is evil, which might open the eyes of his victims to his roguery and their degradation. He knows that even ordinary adults are far too wide-awake to be thus imposed upon, and no wonder he strenuously endeavours to monopolise the management of their education while little children, as the most secure and effective way of blinding them to their own slavery, and of maintaining his tyranny.

Thus he teaches that when he causes wholesale assassinations and massacres of his opponents (as on Bartholomew's day) *that* is but a just judgment of God upon them for their impious wickedness. But if *he* is simply required to conform to the general laws of the State, he resists and exclaims that he is cruelly persecuted, and calls upon all who are yet virtuous (in his sense of the word) to overwhelm and exterminate the sacrilegious reprobates in the name of God.

The so-called persecutions of the early Christians by the Romans were of this kind. The fanatics of the new sect treated the laws of the State with contempt, and when legally and properly punished like ordinary offenders, they falsely alleged that they were persecuted for conscience sake. Of this they have themselves preserved ample evidence, though they have destroyed and falsified much more. We know—and it is incontrovertible—that the Romans tolerated all religions as such, and did not interfere with them at all unless they corrupted manners, or were mutinous to the State. This would be almost guaranteed by the admitted personal virtue and humanity of those Roman Emperors, who are notwithstanding vilely slandered by assertions that they were the principal persecutors for conscience sake of the church; even if we had not specific records of the mutinous and immoral conduct which gave occasion to the so-called persecution. When a soldier in a military camp threw his arms down before his officer and vowed to fight no more for his country, because the principles of his new sect forbade it; or when a civilian, for the same reason, aggressively and intolerantly reviled the religion of the neighbours,—it was of course mutiny in the one, and intolerance in the other,—and not Christianity as a religion—that had to be checked; and the allegation of religious persecution was simply a device of sectarian mendacity. The late occurrences in Prussia throw a flood of light upon those of ancient times, and furnish only fresh examples of the essential immorality of religion generally, and of Christianity in particular. The attempt to obtain money from the credulous under false pretences should, therefore, be exposed, particularly here in Victoria; where the same tactics are applied to local purposes quite as immorally and shamelessly.

It is said that there are in Prussia 10,000 Holy Roman priests; and 13,000,000 of persons whom it is their special function to mesmerise and delude and make as ignorant and stupid as possible. These drones (without the special function of a drone) in the social hive, were actually paid by the State £150,000 a-year—for simply demoralising the people; and it was not until they set themselves up as open malcontents to the State, and professed superior allegiance to a foreign authority, that the State woke up to the impropriety of subsidising treason. The Government has properly withdrawn its support, and I think errs solely in promising to renew it upon their return to loyalty to the State. It is to be hoped that it will think better of it. The assertion in the Duke of Norfolk's letter advertised in the *Argus* on the 24th September, that the payment was not a State subsidy, but an equivalent made by agreement in lieu of sequestered ecclesiastical property of greater value, is an impudent attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the people. Where did the ecclesiastical property come from? Whose was it—or whose could it be—but the State's? And how was it ever obtained from the State, but by fraud, chicanery, and swindling, in the name of God? Did any State ever contract thus except on the condition of allegiance? And is it feasible that the Church would have accepted less than a full equivalent unless it could not help it, and unless it knew that its title was bad? Did not Jesus expressly repudiate property in this world? Did he not also say "No "man can serve two masters; for either he will hate "the one or love the other, or else he will hold to the "one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve [the Pope "and Prussia]."

Go to now, ye 10,000 ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing; weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you. Ye unjust stewards, ye *will* not dig, but to beg ye are NOT ashamed! Ye have heaped Treasure together for the last days—but behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields which you obtained by fraud—crieth; and the cries of them which were defrauded are entered into the ears of—Prince Bismark.

Their is no doubt that these Prussian Roman priests have made the bible serve as *their* authority for every species of fraud, persecution, and murder, and the fact that it can be quite as aptly cited against them was an obvious reason for withholding it from the laity as long as they could. Like the devil, they can quote scripture for their purpose, and they know that it is a two-edged sword that cuts both ways.

The allegation that these recusant Prussian clergy are called upon to apostatise, or to suffer any penalty whatever is transparently false. The profession of their religion—mischievous and immoral though it be—is not

attempted to be interfered with. It is simply disloyalty to the State that has necessitated the withdrawal of their State pay. The demand of the Government was a singularly wise and proper one; namely that the teachers in their schools should come up to the Government standard of fitness; and to ensure it—be examined in Prussian Universities. A most moderate demand, short of which the State could not possibly vindicate its own responsibility for the adequate education of its people. It is one which I think every Government should enforce, and with which every sect should be glad to comply. It is solely the insane papal claim to temporal power—specifically repudiated by Jesus (probably because he was never in a position to claim it), and which it is plainly treason to place in competition with that of the national Government of Prussia,—that is now in question there. The practice of the rites and the teaching of the doctrines of the Holy Roman religion are entirely outside the controversy. If these Holy Roman priests are really Christians, let them study and conform to the precepts which I have quoted as a text from the 13th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. If they are men,—not to say able-bodied bachelors,—let them turn to—and earn their own living at some honest trade, instead of devoting themselves to demoralising and swindling their credulous neighbours, and *raising the per centage of criminals fifty per cent* (as they do here—according to the returns of the Government Statist), and they may even find cause to thank Bismark for making men of them.

It is so obvious that no politician in his senses could tolerate treason in his very camp, that nothing but the colossal egotism which is the characteristic of religious exaltation, could blind these 10,000 able-bodied loafers to the folly as well as immorality of their opposition. If they are not Prussian subjects but the Pope's, they should transfer themselves to his kingdom,—in the next world—if they cannot find it in this one.

All the degradation and comparative idiocy of the Middle Ages lies at the door of that Holy Roman Church, and humanity has a long score against it without any offset. But that the various Protestant sects partially learnt the habit of tolerance while effecting their own emancipation from her thraldom, her shrift would be as short, sharp, and decisive, as *she*—when she was in power—used to allow to malcontents and heretics. Her massacre of St Bartholomew—her inquisition—her racks and stakes—her *auto da fe's*, are not yet obliterated from the memory of Europe; yet she actually is not ashamed to beg alms from those whose ancestors but a few generations since, she deliberately tortured and burnt alive! By all means let us live peaceably and amicably and orderly together. Let bygones *be* bygones. But when she sends us circulars for subscriptions to enable her to oppose the Government by which she is protected, and to foment treason, she proves that her conscience is as blunt, and her head as weak, as her heart was always hard; that she wants only the power to do to us and our children, as she did to our fathers; and we should at least let her know that if we can forgive, we cannot altogether forget.

We have not to go to Prussia to find that the Holy Roman Church has not learnt wisdom by experience. She preaches and practices here, as open treason to the State as she does there; but our Bismark must be public opinion. She steals our children, she multiplies our per centage of criminals, she maintains the ignorance of her part of the population, and she obstructs the education of the rest. And, then she has the effrontery to affirm that she is persecuted. Verily! SHE should better know what persecution really is! Our educational system is one of the best features in our Government, as it tends to moralise the people, or places them in an advantageous position for learning morality. The opposition of the Holy Roman Church to that system is not only treason to the State, but it demoralises the people; and her larger per centage of our criminals is only part of the proof. She calls it persecution if we improve *her* people because *she* will not, and save *her* from the disgrace of adding fifty per cent more to our criminal class than is contributed by other sects. But she is surely in her dotage now. If formerly she killed the prophets, she is now building only *her own* sepulchre!

The Holy Roman Church is the most blindly egotistic and intolerant of all; but she is not alone, nor are others far behind her. For all religions are essentially if not equally intolerant. A real religionist conceives that he is called upon to do God's business for him; because God—if he be not incompetent to do it for himself—certainly neglects it entirely. In fact God is only a fiction adopted by religionists to evade the charge of egotism, and to justify their boundless intolerance. Here in Melbourne—those who desire to use public libraries on the day of the week when they would be of most value to public morality—are actually prevented from doing so by the intolerance—not of Roman Catholics, but—of other religious people, who would be horrified at any proposal to exclude *them* from *their* places of Sunday amusement. It offends them to see anyone even trying to improve himself in any way but theirs. Yet each sect is of course in a smaller minority compared with all the others, to which it is similarly more or less offensive; but it never occurs to them that if the like intolerance were applied to *them*, their own church doors would be locked in their faces. That, however, it has never been proposed to do—except by other sects of religionists. For non-religionist means non-intolerant; and people who devote themselves to the practical improvement of themselves and others, are essentially tolerant,—not only of opinions of which they wholly disapprove, but even of such as they clearly discern to be of directly immoral tendency.

For a false opinion can only be properly ascertained to be false by investigation and discussion, and a true one can only be proved to be true—by experience of the constant impossibility of proving it false. It is, therefore, of more importance to discuss freely *all* opinions, than to hold even true ones untested; and tolerance of free discussion of all opinions is indispensable to distinguish the true from the false. The tolerationist is thus bound to tolerate even the intolerant; and hence the slowness of the progress of the principle of toleration, which can gain way only by the experience by the intolerant of the evils of intolerance. Unfortunately, therefore, for the speedy progress of good order and morality, until the intolerant learn the evil results of their own principle, the tolerant are much at their mercy. Every religionist (conceiving himself to possess THE truth beyond discussion or test) feels bound to be intolerant;—to thrust his assumed truth down the throat of everybody;—to execute whatever *he fancies* is the will of his God. No religionist, therefore, can consistently be tolerant; and hence every religion is intolerant and immoral. Nevertheless it should be tolerated, in order to be ultimately proved false. The various Protestant sects have compromised matters so far as to tolerate *each other*, because experience has proved to them that each of them is too weak to secure any liberty unless by the mutual concession of it by all. But they have not yet learned toleration as a general principle, and each would—had it power—be as intolerant to every other, as every dominant religion always has been. Hence all the sects make common cause against the non religionist; he being tolerant and passive, while they are intolerant and aggressive. They cannot but *feel* that while *only* tolerated, they can never become dominant; and hence they are enemies of general toleration; or of more than that by which each maintains its existence They are all intolerant of the simple tolerationist who is anti-religious; and they would persecute *him* as the common enemy of all religion—could they do so without jeopardising their own title to toleration. Meantime partial toleration ensures the spread of knowledge and common sense, even among the sects—members of which are thus continually brought to see the superior advantages of toleration, and the essential intolerance of every religion. They would openly secede in far greater numbers, but for the modified *persecution* which the sects, having compacted not to practise as against each other, are always ready to visit upon the general tolerationist as the natural enemy of every particular religion.

Persecution formerly meant, confiscation, torture, and

death. It now means less of civil than social disability; but the struggle for existence is so much more severe than of old, that every disadvantage becomes a serious one. Until lately a non-religionist had no standing in a law court, and has but a very precarious one now. He has thus at best but a doubtful security against depredation; and of this, advantage is often taken by religionists, who can frequently, therefore, slander and rob him with impunity. Even those who value his friendship prefer to pass him by without being seen to recognise him, and his house and family are shunned as an unclean thing. But the turning point is near. The late ballot at the Athenæum on the Sunday question has shown that though the really tolerant are content to mind their own business, and never act on the offensive, and though the absolute non-religionists may be still in a considerable minority, yet their principles have so spread and modified the views of many who have not yet openly seceded from the sects, that on a question of toleration, at any rate, a very even vote can be secured. This speaks volumes for the extent and accelerating rapidity of the change which is certainly taking place in public opinion.

The action of the Sabbatarians in Melbourne is vastly different from that of the Inquisition in Spain, of the bloody Mary and Elizabeth in England; and of Mohammedanism and the Holy Roman Church *wherever they have power*. But it exhibits precisely the same intolerant principle and dog-in-the-manger spirit. 530 persons who use unmolested *their* places of Sunday amusement, prevent 490 others from using that which *they* prefer. The proportions of those who desire to visit the Public Library on Sunday and to interfere with no one else; and of those—who—while possessing without hindrance, the privilege of visiting the place which *they* choose—prevent others, by their intolerant interference, from using the Public Library, Museum, &c.,—have not been tested. They may be more or less. But it is evidently more than a mere question of tolerance and intolerance. The moral responsibility is also involved, for all the evil into which those persons fall, who are thus excluded from places where they might be out of harm's way. The Sabbatarians cannot divest themselves of the responsibility which they thus assume, unless they *re-lay* it upon those—whose it really is and should be. Those Sabbatarians, who are not entirely blinded by sectarianism, and who desire to be conscientious, should recognise this very grave responsibility as not theirs; as well as the intolerance involved in depriving others of a privilege—the equivalent of which they themselves enjoy undisturbed.

Although the local Sabbatarian intolerance is perfectly identical in principle with the *persecution* which culminated long since in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and only lacks opportunity to develope to the same proportions; it is of course a mere trifle compared with the terrible pains and penalties—the tortures and deaths actually endured by the thousands of martyrs in the cause of tolerance, whose names even have not come down to us, but "*by whose stripes we are healed.*" We, who, by their sufferings, live in less trying times, should not forget or despise their labours, or leave the completion of them entirely to the chapter of accidents. I think that the least each of us can do is to endeavour to expedite the growth of that public opinion which is gradually emancipating the world from the thraldom of superstition. Indeed we have but to exercise the liberty which has been achieved for us by the devotion of such men as Bruno, Vanini, Galileo, Servetus, Elliot, Leighton, Lilburne, Prynne, and thousands of others.

Let us now do this by clearly distinguishing between true and spurious intolerance and persecution. Persecution is active persistent intolerance; and intolerance is the denying to others privileges we enjoy, or claiming more than we are willing to concede to others. No religious martyrs who die for any dogma are worthy to be compared with the men I have just named who suffered for general truth and tolerance sake, which they claimed for others as well as for themselves. Not for any *particular assumed* truth, but for *freedom of discussion*, whereby any real truth has the best chance of being discovered and established. Their persecutors assumed rights and privileges which they took from others. If religious people have suffered, they always, when they had the chance, persecuted in return, as their principles bound them to do. These Prussian Holy Roman Clergy are malcontent traitors to their country. Richard Carlile and G. J. Holyoake were genuine sufferers for liberty and tolerance. It is our local sabbatarians that are intolerant and persecute as far as they can. They enjoy what they grudge to others. Our local Holy Romanists are as malcontent and immoral as their Prussian brothers, and the complaint of persecution is wholly false in both cases. They are refused nothing which others have, but they insist on having the privilege of demoralising society. And while we are bound to tolerate *them*, we must not for their sakes, be intolerant to others, or suffer *them* to be so. Their demoralisation of the people in obstructing education, and as *proved by their enormous per centage in the proportion of crime*, must be prevented.

For the rest,—non-religionists should shew by their lives that their morality is—as it ought to be—really superior to that of any religionists; and they will soon find that they can live down the uncharitable prejudices against them in the minds of their neighbours. The religious laity are not now ignorant of all but what their priests think it prudent to tell them. They cannot but be taught and moralised by commerce, business, literature, railways, telegraphs, and the competition of society; and ignorance, indolence, and intolerance, are now generally at a discount. Morality is growing into higher estimation than religion, though it is not yet clearly understood that they are necessarily in inverse proportions—being really and radically antagonistic—to each other. The sooner this is clearly understood, the better.

CONCLUDING SEANCES OF THE ENERGETIC CIRCLE.

Dear Harbinger,—Our well-known Circle held its last sitting under its term of office—five years—on Sunday evening, the 17th instant. There was eleven members present, the others having left Sandhurst for the sea bathing a few weeks ago. The seances of the past month have, for the most part, been but a repetition of those of the previous one; the principal change being the strong efforts made by the controlling spirits to materialise themselves plain enough to be recognised by us, and, at the same time, to show us the medium. I regret to say in this they have been but partially successful. Several draped figures have been seen by all the members while the medium was visible, but no features. It became evident to us that the medial power of our medium was not great enough to allow of this being done within the period for which the circle was formed; and, as you can guess, the knowledge of this fact was a grievous disappointment to us. Certainly, on Sunday evening, while others only saw the outlines of a face, I saw one quite plainly. It was the face of a little woman, seated on a chair in front of the cabinet, with the entranced medium standing beside her, holding King's Light up to it that it might be seen. I saw it twice, for nearly a minute, and then it faded away before me. There was a white hood-like dress on the head, the eyes open and dark, nose straight, face small, and complexion that of a corpse. I expressed an opinion that it was the same face which I had lately had my hand drawn over, and Alfred Longmore, who was then controlling the medium said I was quite right, and that it was his wife Eliza whose face I had seen. It was a matter of deep regret to me that more did not see it. Her hand was subsequently placed in mine, and I felt a ring on one of the fingers of it. King addressed us on Friday evening, urging us to keep ourselves by ourselves, that he would want many of us before long, that a second medium would call on the chairman within the next four months, who, if brought to sit with their present one, they would have all the manifestations that the most advanced circle have ever had. Respecting the two sealed packages, King said they were in the custody of the spirit George Abell, who was "not a man to break his word" But they would not be brought at present. One who was connected with one of them had gone a jour-

ney but he would soon return, and the chairman would receive them at his own place. I, thinking that the "gentleman who had gone on a journey" must refer to Mr. J. C., said "Yes, but he won't likely return for some years," when King said, "You are wrong." It was, therefore, someone else he referred to, but who I dont know, as I am unaware of the names of the six Melbourne gentlemen who got up one of the packets. I may add, for their information, that at the close of the seance on Friday evening, as an act of justice to the medium, I requested him to take a solemn oath that from the night on which the aforesaid sealed packets were abstracted from his pocket while in a state of trance in the Circle-room, some two years ago, he knew nothing of them. He cheerfully complied, and as all the circle are sworn not to deceive themselves, or their fellow creatures as to what happens in the circle, the matter of the packets must remain a mystery to them, as well as to the owners of them, until the spirits choose to unravel it, if they ever do so. At our last seance, on Sunday night, the spirits each took an affectionate farewell of us all, telling us we had all an interest in the life beyond the grave, and urging us to live as became men and women, if we would be happy here and hereafter. I delivered a short address to the Circle, recalling to their memories the different phases of the Spiritual phenomena which we had since we first sat proved to be true; and stating that though we had not been able to obtain the more advanced materialisations, we had had sufficient even of them to demonstrate to us that with greater medial power we would have got them also, and that that was the sole cause of our not being able to succeed better. The circle unanimously declared their confidence and respect for the medium, and all shook hands with him at the close. Votes of thanks were passed to the two Chairmen, the Mother of the Circle, the medium, and the Organist, for their kind services; and after the latter had played "Vital Spark!" on the organ, the Energetic Circle adjourned *sine die*.

THE CHAIRMAN.

Sandhurst, 19th Dec., 1876.

[P.S.—Some time soon I may have some thoughts to express through your columns on the strange yet wonderful phenomena which I have from time to time recorded in the *Harbinger*. The Circle are fully sensible of your kindness in publishing it. I wish you and your readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. At the close of our five years' investigation I may add that Medium and all of us are in robust health. We sat twice a week regularly, I never being once absent from my post, nor has the medium except on two occasions, from temporary illness.]

MODERN THOUGHT.

In considering Spiritualism as a Religion, we were forced to review briefly, the aspects of the Modern Life in which it moves, and from which it receives so much taint, and obstruction, and in estimating its place as a philosophy, we are in like manner naturally brought in contact with the Modern Thought in which it is expressed, by which it is influenced, and in which it must find a friend, an ally, or an enemy. But to obtain a complete view of the intellectual condition of mankind in the present, to measure its promises and performances with those of the Past; to define the nature, extent, and importance of its various tendencies, and to accurately determine their permanence, value, and relations to one another, and to the Future, is a task of gigantic proportions, and inconceivable complexity. In comparison with the historian's outlook it is as if one who in the very centre of a hard fought field, where he is perhaps himself a combatant, and surrounded by the smoke and noise of the conflict, should endeavor to describe the determination of each particular onset, together with a forecast of the future of the whole. A dispassionate verdict can scarcely be obtained when the prejudices to be discerned are those which will be in most active operation, not only around, but probably within him; the delusions of the hour, among the most necessary foes of a faithful witness, are the very ones he is most likely to possess, or disregard; among the discords of party, in some degree assuredly, a partizan; the living body of the times, overflowing with energetic motion, and with changeful features of passion, terrifying or subduing the soul, is a far different object to that petrifaction which the historian of the coming days will discover, and in the quietude of his study anatomise, in the scales of a then unprejudiced judgment. The only safety in such a search will be, in the rigid adherence to facts as interpreted by the established principles of repeated experience; while above all things we must dread narrowness of view, and insufficiency of Data, we must also

"Imagination's airy wing repress"

and prefer barrenness of conclusion, to error of statement, however tempting its fallacious generalisations may appear.

A sweeping assertion is often based upon a cursory glance, but in a unanimous verdict truth in some shape or other is sure to exist; and as the present century has determinedly declared itself the Age of Science, we may be prepared to find that important factor, the most permanent in the period. But in such a statement we must premise that there is at once apparent a certain assumption which will be continually recurring in some form or other throughout the context, and this briefly is, that in a perusal of the lives and thoughts of men, all races except the Caucasian are tacitly omitted, and a numerically unimportant, localy limited, and historically recent Parvenu Family struts in the purple of self-complacent royalty, and signs itself in many foolish documents "mankind." Forgetting for the time being the outlying tracts of Asia, Africa, a large portion of America, and Oceanica, and directing our attention to the doings of the noisier nation that inhabits the narrow line about the Atlantic basin, we shall find ourselves restricted still further to a few dots, or social centres, whose united powers produce some few score students and thinkers, magnificently addressed as "The Intellectual world"; of whom again selecting more particularly the Anglo Saxon element, we shall proceed upon our investigation cheered by the hope that this Microcosm will reveal the Macrocosm of Modern Thought.

The Present is the product of all the Past, and is the necessary, natural, and harmonious result of all its antecedents; the existing state of things is one built up by many centuries of precedent life, and its forces are those of a similar character—the progressive nature of man, slowly moulding the sphere through which it passes into a closer and more perfect relation to itself. The long pent-up powers which found their first expression in the French Revolution with a suddenness and force corresponding to their former repression, prolonged themselves into this century, when the political convulsions which partly culminating in 1848, and still in motion upon the Continent, found their parallel in the Chartist Riots and Reform Bills of the Mother Country. The poetical brilliancy of its early years, when Wordsworth and Coleridge, Shelley and Keats, Scott and Byron, cast an Elizabethian glory over its literature faded away, its place was supplied by science, and in the shadow of the former inspiration Faraday laid the foundation of our physical advances by the experiments that have led to so many important discoveries, and through the labors of Helmholtz, Maxwell, Crookes, Tyndall, Stewart, Andrews, and Barrett, have placed upon a secure basis the allied sciences of Chemistry and Physics. During the same period Geology was rescued from its former obscurity, and in the hands of Lyell, Phillips, Murchison and Sedgwick, took its place among its sister studies; whilst closely united to it the improved instruments and literary abilities of the Herschel's Adams, Leverrier', Flammarion, Huggins, and Procter gave Astronomy a wider field and a more accurate knowledge than it had ever before attained to. The effect of these notable discoveries, and the ability of their exponents, brought them before the popular eye, which answering to the attraction, proved itself a willing follower; other departments of inquiry gladly acknowledged themselves subservient to the new chiefs, and the minds of all were directed more immediately to the manifestations of Nature. Hailed by the sceptics with delight, by those weary with profitless metaphysical

discussion with relief, and by the wavering with conviction, the materialistic studies not only gained in strength but in favor, doubly intensified when the implicit reliance in Scientific inquiry, and the deepening faith in Law, as opposed to Miracle, was carried into Biology, in which Vogt, Haeckel, Hooker, Huxley, and Carpenter have gained a portion of the renown awarded to Wallace, and still more especially to Darwin, a naturalist of such eminence as to compare favorably with the greatest names of the Past. Bringing to the former conception new facts which placed man also as a link in the chain of Progress, and demonstrating with a patience, and Genius incomparable, the ideas of development, partially held by Goethe and Von Baer, the citidels of orthodoxy and Revelation were assaulted upon every side, and at the same moment Astronomy, inclining more and more to the nebulæ hypothesis, and Geology in the union of the Vulcan and the Neptune, sects taking up the tale and witnessing to the vast ages of the Earth, as well as to progression of types during past Eras, was supplemented by a theory so simple, and yet so masterly as to commend itself at once to the greatest thinkers of the day, by whom Man, as to his physical frame, was recognised as the ultimate of the animal kingdom. Genesis thus cast aside, and the whole of revelation indirectly impeached, a greater freedom of thought than was ever known, sprang up among all classes, and prepared the way for other doubts, as to the genuineness of the so-called inspired records, their historical derivation and their unsupported or unreasonable dogmas.

A school of thought then arose which under the name of "Positiveism" boldly discarded all knowledge but that of Science, and placed Theology, Revelation and Metaphysics beyond the range of human thought or intellect. Its founder, the distinguished Auguste Comte, though eccentric in some particulars, was a man of profound research, and extraordinary abilities, who did much to advance the influence and propagate the truths of Physical Science. In England a kindred school was born from the ashes of Scotch Metaphysics, and the teachings of Bentham and James Mill, enforced by the Psychological works of Bain, and Maudsley, and the writings of Frederick Harrison, John Morley, Congreve, and Lewes, found its leader in the cultivated intellect of J. S Mill; and this division, though not quite following Comte when he "Led God to the frontiers of the Universe, and thanking him for his provisional services, dismissed him with a bow" was yet entirely at union with the character of his scientifie views, and devoted to the study of the problems of Life and Mind from purely experimental sources. To these names (not noticed chronologically, but classified for convenience of view) must be added those of DeMorgan, Jevons, Lecky, Draper, and the Thompsons, staunch followers of the new Gospel, which in a thousand ways permeated the mental and social spheres of life; with iconoclastic aim shattering the superstitions of previous ages, with firm hand collecting the materials for future greatness, and adding to the comfort and ability of mankind, by the numerous mechanical contrivances which in every department of the Domestic, Military, Commercial and Agricultural Economies, divided the present from the past by a wide gulf of external progression.

But these offices were disconnected, the full significance of the heterogeneous labors of so many detached workers, unperceived, and the crowning glories of the great movement ungathered, until educated beneath their new and vigorous influence, two great geniuses became the complete expression of the Scientific Spirit which hitherto though forcible and famous, had been to a certain extent fragmentary. To these is due the honor of having first discerned the true import and the highest meaning of the science of the nineteenth century, which found its Historian in Buckle, and its Philosopher in Spencer. The "History of Civilisation" is a mighty Torso, and like the ruins of Nineveh, or Carnatic, seems to have been the work of an intellect Titanic in its strength and majesty. It was a new revolt of man against the Gods of his necessities, and it seemed as if in terror they had slain the heaven-scaler, whose peerless prowess threatened to unveil the inmost sanctuaries and strongholds of their power. It promised, like a new Babel, to build the Temple of Knowledge so high, that henceforth no Deluge of Ignorance, or Bigotry, could shake the elevated ascendency of Man. It stands unique in literature, like the Colossus of Rhodes, spanning the river of Time, and with each foot firm, the one upon the Spiritual, the other upon the material Universe, so that we who creep between them, seem like pigmies of another kind, whose united effort could never continue the Promethian work which he began.

> "The unfinished window of Alladin's Tower
> Unfinished must remain."

Yet the Philosopher, as a philosopher should, includes the historian, and favored by a longer life, has even surpassed the achievments of his young compeer. "The System of Philosophy"; of which the "First Principles" and the "Principles of Biology," and "Psychology" are already published; the "Social Statics," "Study of Sociology," and Essays that support and expound it; form, with the volumes now in process of composition upon "Sociology" and "Morality," the grandest effort of the Human Mind to comprehend the known Universe. By this all contemporary aims are reduced to trivialities. It was the work of which Aristotle dreamed, Bacon spoke, but only Spencer has attempted and largely achieved. It contains the discoveries of all the writers we have enumerated, and based upon all preceeding systems, tested by the foremost modern methods, exhibits a sublimity of design, a rareness of execution, a catholicity of conception, and an elevation of style, and purpose, which ranks it at once as the work of a World's Teacher, the Crown of its Age, and of Scientific Philosophy. Such then is an inconsiderable sketch of the Modern Scientific School, and its chief votaries, who though differing largely among themselves, as to the minutæ of their beliefs, are so far agreed that Knowledge is the only guide, and Science the only autho rity upon all problems presented to the Mind; that Experimental and Physical investigation are the greatest aids to truth, that the Universe is reducible to perfect Law, and that all that exists is the product of discoverable antecedents. Much is ignored, much else entitled unworthy of, or beyond proof, and the prevalent conviction current is that in Matter is probably "All the potencies of Life and Mind." Spencer, as usual beyond his School, teaches that these are the unknowables, while the general conclusion holds, that very definitely Matter "IS", and that all other names testify the "IS NOT," or non existent. There is a small body of men—Orthodox Scientists—who though accepting these conclusions in great part, yet hold, more or less, other doctrines not quite in accordance with them; among whom may be mentioned Agassiz, Mivart, Owen, Wyville Thomson, Dawson, and the Duke of Argyle; while a few metaphysicians linger about the shrines of the great Idealists, Berkeley, Kant, Hegel, and Fichte, who notwithstanding their remarkable powers find few Disciples untouched by the prevailing epidemic of Materialistic Science. It is here that we gradually pass into the Religious atmosphere, which in the department of Orthodoxy is barren of all but a few eminent thinkers, such as Hamilton, Mansel, Seeley, Tulloch and Parker, who drawing more or less assistance from the German school, are yet connected with and expounded by the "Broad Church", which in Stanley, Kingsley, Maurice, and F. W. Robertson, occupies a place among the cultivated and more aristocratic classes. The ranks of mere orthodoxy are chiefly strong in the more Business and well-to-do sections of society, where the green-grocer element finds much satisfaction in the utterances of Moody and Sankey, while drapery and the tea and sugar interests, are represented by such howling dervishes as Spurgeon and Talmadge—men no doubt sincere in their very flesh and blood, black coat and pomatum, sanctity; of service to certain orders of mind as representing the highest Spiritual Life they are capable of; productive of some charitable goodness mixed with much self satisfaction; hot toast and threats of future conversion into an article not quite as nutritious, though by a parallel process of the miserable sinners unbaptised into a recognition of the inspired origin of the small scandal of Judæa, as to David and his concubines, or the still smaller doings of the Polynesia

Missionaries, whose objects have been well summed up in the expressive union of "Jesus Christ and Cocoa Nut Oil." Popular Christianity as to its contributions to Modern Thought is certainly a pitiable spectacle, no longer fired by the eloquence of a Hooker, or Taylor, supported by the pen of a Milton or Chillingworth, or lighted by the presence of a Swift or Bunyan, sunk into a dismal obscurity of tenth-rate trumpets, or screaming penny whistles, patronised by a blasé dilletanti, or a vulgar fanaticism, countenanced by the selfish and the worldly, and crammed only by advertisement of "Sensations". Removed to the very opposite pole, stands the only school of Religious Thought, which in the future will be remembered or admired for its talent and its uses. Of a primitive simplicity and seriousness of Belief it stands in the pure utterances of the founder of their Religion, which it seeks to clearly comprehend and faithfully obey. It is the smallest, and perhaps the most truly spiritual, if not the most able of the Modern movements; its audience though wide and admiring, bound by the lustre of the genius attached to it, is to all intents and purposes the most insignificant; its leaders the wonder and laughing stock of the foolish and frivolous, are but three in number, but those three of such surpassing merit, as to create a power almost as formidable as that of Science, and one of the greatest in the cause of Truth and Right. By way of distinction it may be termed the "Advanced Religious School," for its characteristics are, that instead of, as Science is endeavoring to do, concentrating its attention upon the outer Universe, it appeals to that within, whilst Science diminishes Man's importance to an infinitessimal quantity, in the vastness of creation, this exalts it, as the key to and end of all; whilst Science, dealing only with principles of ascertained action, crushes the individual, and measures only the mass, this again rescues the personality and studies the mass through it; as the first draws its strength from experiment, the second dwells upon history; the first awakens thought, the second calls for action; while the one through its intellect dissects Nature, the other through its affections worships God.

The earliest of this inspired School, Thomas Carlyle, has gained for himself a respectful hearing, well deserved and well won, by his long labors in the field of History, in which he was the first to cast aside the superficial system of his predecessors, and plunging into the very core of past times, presented them to the world, not tricked out in his own theatrical properties, nor yet elegantly embalmed, but with living, breathing, moving, men and women, in a world as it once was, with all its passions, errors, hopes, and manners, as faithfully depicted as if Hogarth or Wilkie had sketched them in the every instant, and incident, of their careers. A Historian cannot but be a moralist, and Carlyle is one of the finest, possessed of the keenest insight, and marvellous breadth of appreciation, he is also gifted with great insight, and a power of thought that renders him a Delphic mysterious oracle, to whom the proudest listen. To a still smaller audience did Essays written in the intervals of business commend themselves, when Arthur Helps, also a Historian of repute though of a lighter calibre than Carlyle, and by employment a Secretary to the Privy Council, found himself drawn into the vortex of literature, and compelled to speak the truths burning within him, to a careless and a callous age. From his lips the wise and gentle words fell with a delicate simplicity, that tempted the true hearted to purer lives and nobler deeds. The model of the gentleman he added to the unaffected graces of his disposition, the mind of a scholar and a statesman, tastes discriminating and elevated, and a depth and holiness of sympathy, that made him as beautiful, as brave, in the cause of honor or of generosity.

Last and greatest, the mantle fell upon one, strange to say, also engaged in other pursuits, when called more particularly to "His Father's Business," John Ruskin, who while yet a young man had attained to a high pitch of fame as the Philosopher and Critic of Art, unequalled by any former writer, was gradually drawn from these studies to preach the gospel of a new life. His motives explained with the exquisite tenderness characteristic of the man he thus states—

"I am not an unselfish person, nor an evangelical one; I have no particular pleasure in doing good, nor do I dislike doing it so much as to expect to be rewarded for it in another world. But I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like, and the very light of the morning sky when there is any, has become hateful to me, because of the Misery which I know of, and see signs of when I know it not, which no imagination can interpret too bitterly."

And with this feeling it is that he has devoted his Life, Mind and Fortune, to the stemming of this same Sorrow, which he so bitterly regrets, and in the "St. George's Company" is striving to purchase land, whereon those who now live like beasts in the purlieus of our great cities, labor like oxen in the winter fields, or fritter away their Beings in the manufactories that defile alike Heaven and Earth with the smoke of their furnaces, slaying immortal souls, and destroying the lively capacities of sense and limb which the All-Good has given them, may live a better life, humble and toilful it may be, but at least with some knowledge, health, and rest, and some preparation for the Eternity before them. Such is the task of this Man, who with the soul of a Dante, the eloquence of a Demosthenes, as scathing as Junius, as elevated as Burke, and as melodius as Plato, with the sensibilities of a Shelley, and the versatility of a Da Vinci, is leading a life which for purity of purpose, and noble spirituality of aim, may compare even with that of the God-man he worships, and which assuredly has no known superior in the heroism of present or past. For even as his Master, he is subjected to the revilings of the foolish and base, and suffers more because of the greatness of his compassion, and the depth of his Love. With such a trinity and a few far outlying co-workers, Matthew Arnold, Greg, Martineau, and Miss Cobbe, the whole Religious Life of England though left to their guardianship can scarcely be regarded as past away; and while the rude and vigorous pages of Carlyle, the sweetness of Helps, and the brilliancy and fervour of Ruskin survive, the Lamp will be kept burning, though it shines upon a stormy sea. Sartor Resartus, Past and Present, Realmah, Friends in Council, Ethics of the Dust, Queen of the Air, Unto this Last, The Crown of Wild Olives, and Fors Clavigèra form a Literature in themselves that will for ever defy decadence.

The Last School of Thought which is likely to attract the future to the present, is the youngest, and as yet the weakest of the three, it unites the former two, and while admitting all that Science postulates, contents itself with adding to it, a body of evidence which extends its base sufficiently to support the "Advanced Religious" School, and in the fact of its being such a copula its whole glory lies. Some of its adherents direct their studies wholly to the accumulation of such facts as will obtain for it a recognition by the world at large, and in this most laudable endeavour, the names of many alluded to for their standing in the known Sciences, must be supplemented by those of Wagner, Boutlerof, Aksakof and Perty, as representing its continental influence. Among those who dwell rather upon the principles of Life which it dictates, and regard it therefore as a Religious Revelation, John Page Hopps, Samuel Watson and many other original writers deserve notice for the high tone of moral teaching with which it inspires in them. The Philosophy of this Section has been chiefly contributed by Seers, or Mediums already mentioned, of whom Davis and Mrs. Britten are the most renowned (and justly so), for the equal attention which they give to the preceeding divisions, and their comprehension of the right relation as a whole to the existing systems. But among the writers best compared with those of the foregoing schools, as a normal expounder of the new faith, Professor S. B. Brittan, one of the earliest and most truly trained thinkers, calls for special praise, not only because of his unwavering fidelity to its best interests, and the benefits conferred upon it, through the Magazine which under his guidunce was a rival to the highest-class publications of the day, but for the sterling ability displayed in his "Man and his Relations," as well as in the miscellaneous articles from his pen, which have ever been admirable both in aim and manner of thought. Indeed in this department of literature the Spiritual Philosophy, is most rich and promising, and the contributions to the Journals of the movement are often of a kind to warrant high praise, apart

from their peculiar contents, as for instance those of Prof. Eccles, Mr. T. P. Barkas, F.G.S. G. L. Ditson, M.D., "M. A. Oxon," Prof. Buchanan, and the Author of "The Supersensual World," an Essay published in the "Banner of Light" a few months back, which for genuine merit would rank above any similar production in the London Magazines, except perhaps those of Deutsch, or a few of the greatest names before referred to; in brief, the Philosophy of this last school, is an extension of the Scientific, inasmuch as it independently adopts and continues the evolution theory, to its ultimate in the Spiritual Progression of Man, while it is equally at union with the advanced Religious Teachers since it recognises, and indeed proves, the necessity of unceasing efforts for its perfection. It adopts the method of the first, in all its branches of inquiry, and by them at the same time leads up to the active and aspiring life, which the second strives to inculcate. The Reign of law, the Natural Origin of the Earth, and Man, his constant advancement, the Right of Reason, the Necessity of Doubt, and the supreme value of Science are no where more distinctly taught than in Spiritualism, which points to the glaring errors of Materialism, the need for an affectional instruction, for a nobler existence, of higher aims, and wider opportunities, weighing the value of individual souls of Beauty, and calling for their education in Truth, Honor, and Temperance, by the exertions of its believers, as consistently (through its higher teachers in this or other spheres) as even Ruskin would desire. Modern Thought, in its three great Schools, is a lasting disproof of the much feared degeneracy of the race, and in the number and ability of its Scientific teachers, compares favorably with the best epochs of the past, while it is laying a sure foundation in its Religious and Spiritualistic movements for a great Future. It possesses two or three minds of the very highest order of intellect, and the remainder atone largely for their lack of Genius, by their industry and ardour. The Science of the eighteenth century foreran the Poets and Patriots of fifty years ago, that of ours will result sooner or later in an upheaval of kindred strength, while the revival of true Christianity, in theory, and practice, by the trinity of teachers, and the inspirations of Spiritualism, promises a still higher reward. Science is the first Harbinger of new Eras, Philosophy follows, and Religion bearing in its train Liberty, Purity, Peace, and Happiness, is the Golden Fruit. We must not cavil if this is the seed time of the world, but rather rejoice that to us is given so great a charge and such abundant power of Good, while our only care should be to fulfil these tasks well and quickly. It is in the Destiny of Spiritualism to ease the burden and earn the gratitude of humanity, when the harvest time shall come. It lifts the veil that hangs in heavy folds of Fear, and shows that Love not Hate is hidden behind them. It smooths away for ever the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and opens the Golden City to our gladdened gaze, wherefrom our brothers watch us, and wherein our hope is set. The weary Pilgrim has forever its divine gleams to soothe his heaviest hour, and the visitation of those pure and noble souls to strengthen him at need. The souls of all the sages of the Past are pressing upon Modern Thought, and stooping down to trace the channels in which it shall flow. We can mark their invisible presence in the pages of those whom we have praised, but more than this is possible to the earnest seeker. It may attain communion with that Power

> Which in us all doth yet prefer
> The purer shrine—a Minister
> More true—whose best interpreter

the Immortals are. It may receive and obey the behests of those, the pure in Spirit, who now see God and goodness, without flaw or stain. Man may walk with angels, work on Earth, and wake in Heaven, in the flesh. This is the Grandest Truth and the greatest Modern Thought

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Errata.—In "Sabbath Question" last month, page 1117, col. 1, line 64, for consistent, read considerate; col 2, line 3, for possessed, read prepossessed; page 1118, col. 1, line 18, for reported, read reputed.

DARWINISM AND SPIRITUALISM.*

The Philosophical Spiritualists of the present day ignore, as a rule, the idea of the fall of man, believing that the tendency in all things is to progress; hence, looking back into the distant past, far beyond the period assigned to the creation of man we can conceive of him in a condition little above the animal in being and intelligence, but still a type containing within himself the germs of a greater development than the animal. The theory of evolution is consistent with the spiritual idea, but Darwinism, as generally understood, is materialistic in its tendency. The object of the pamphlet under notice is to show wherein the theories of Darwin and those of progressed Spiritualists conflict, and to combat the Darwinian hypothesis of man's relationship to the ape.

Types, Mr. Peebles says, are eternal, and do not merge into each other. Unlike, or different species, do not procreate, or reproduce their kind; different species never glide into each other. We cannot put the matter in a more condensed form than is done by Mr. Peebles on page 21 and 22.

THE TWO POSITIONS CLEARLY STATED.

Darwinian schools of thinkers introduce us first to slimy protoplasm, then to ascidians, and in after-ages to snarling hairy creatures living for indefinite periods in the dense forests of the Miocene and earlier Pliocene eras. After a long time came the rigors of the glacial age; and these ape-like creatures took to dens and caves. Hunger impelled them to seize and devour such weaker animals as they could overtake and master. Advancing through long decades, they no longer used their lower extremities in climbing trees, but, putting them to higher uses, began a sort of crouching walking. Their brains also enlarging, they became day by day more cunning and sagacious. Ambitious, they finally learned to use weapons of stone and wood, destroying their victims.

And so these hairy monsters, neither "beasts nor humans," grew; combining the habits of the bear, the agility of the monkey, with some faint glimmerings of the savage. The glacial period now long past, these man-like apes moved on and upward in the path of progress, leaping out of their orbits, parting with their coarse shaggy hair, whitening in their complexions to beautiful blondes, and finally dropping their tails as untimely fruit! This theory, having no use for a God, personal or impersonal, points Caucasians to hairy, tree-climbing apes, as their ancestors.

On the other hand, the Spiritual philosophy takes this view of the subject: Spirit is causation, force, life. All existence constitutes a magnificent unity. *The soul is the man;* and this soul, a divinely etherealized portion of the Infinite "over-soul," did not "descend," or, more properly, come up, through ascidians, apes, and baboons; nor did it in any sense originate from matter.

Spiritualism accounts for the appearance of man upon the principles of a rational evolution from germinal types—*types*, allied to the divine archetype, God.

The method of this evolution may be thus stated: The divine Spirit, moving upon *Kosmos*,—moving upon and interpermeating the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, sublimating matter, and quickening the life-germs related to each series in the chain of being,—was long preparing for the crowning work, man. And all these myriads years of time, typal man was waiting to take on physical form, as the acorn waits through the winter-time for conditions to start oak-ward. . . The glacial period with its snows and ice had now passed away. Many of the formidable beasts of the tertiary period had disappeared in convulsions and revolutions. Suns were golden. Summers in tropical lands, leafy and perpetual, were crowned with ripened fruitage; while spiritual, magnetic, and electric forces, acting upon, refining, moulding, and shaping earthly elements into forms,—really *matrices*,—had so adapted conditions, that the divine soul-germ could become incarnated. Then transpired the divine descent of the heavenly into the earthly; and monadic man, primitive man, commenced his mortal existence. Externally, he was necessarily coarse, gross, grovelling; but the divine germ within, aflame with mental and moral potentialities and possibilities, prophesied of a higher perfected humanity, and all in harmony with natural law through evolution.

The spiritual position is decidedly the most attractive, as well as rational.

Following this are a number of demarcations between animals and men. "There are," says Mr. Peebles, "according to the learned Soemerang, over fifteen important anatomical differences between the brain of man and the highest animals." After quoting Max Müller in support of his position, he concludes by expressing his sympathies with that philosophy, which puts evolution in the place of creation, and pre-existence in place of the soul's descent from apes and other animals.

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* The Conflict between Darwinism and Spiritualism: By J. M. Peebles. Boston, 1876.

MR. J. M. PEEBLES COMING!

About eighteen months since, hearing that overtures had been made to Mr. Peebles by the Spiritualists of Calcutta, to visit that city, we wrote to that gentleman urging him in the event of his accepting the invitation, to take Melbourne in his route, and pay us a second visit. Our letter was favorably received, and a partial promise given to accede to our request if the journey was undertaken, the late Victorian Association undertaking to pay Mr. Peebles fare from Calcutta to Melbourne. When this veteran apostle of Spiritualism was last here in 1872-3, his expositions of the philosophy and religion of Spiritualism, exercised a very modifying influence on the prejudices of the public against it, and attracted many to an investigation of its evidences, Appreciating the good results which we have seen to flow from his former visit, we have urged upon our brother that the field was ready for another sowing, and he has length determined to come to this part of the world again. He advises us of his intention to leave for San Francisco in November, so that at the time we write he is probably *en route*. He tells us it is hard to get away on account of the demand for his services as a lecturer. This we can well understand, for he has ever been a popular lecturer, and "hath had honour in his own country," which is rather exceptional with prophets and apostles of Spiritualism. It is not improbable that before our next issue is published Mr. Peebles will have reached these shores, and we trust that the many friends he made on the occasion of his last visit will rally round him and aid him in the good work he desires to accomplish.

HIDDEN SPRINGS UNCOVERED*

About three months since, the Rev. Roger Bede Vaughan, Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, delivered a lecture at the Hall of the Holy Catholic Guild, entitled "Hidden Springs," in which after lamenting the wide and increasing spread of Infidelity and Rationalism, he endeavoured to trace Paganism, Supernaturalism, and Materialism to their hidden springs, and the various influences in relation to the existing condition of things which they have exercised on the minds and conduct of humanity, concluding by appealing to christians of all denominations, to co-operate together to defeat a common adversary. The lecture was published verbatim in the "Sydney Morning Herald," and subsequently printed in pamphlet form. From the eminent position and scholarly ability of the lecturer, it attracted considerable attention, comment, and discussion, and Mr. Tyerman as a prominent rationalistic leader, undertook to expose the fallacies of the Archbishop's arguments in two lectures, which were given at the Victoria Theatre, Sydney, before the largest audiences that have ever assembled there. At the conclusion of the second lecture it was found, that some of the points of Dr. Vaughan's pamphlet had not been touched upon, and Mr. Tyerman was requested to deliver a third and concluding lecture on the 29th October. The pamphlet under notice contains the three lectures which are a complete analysis of Dr. Vaughan's lecture, and an exposure of the fallacy of his position. The Archbishop in his delineation of paganism and materialism, naturally exhibited their darkest side, to heighten by contrast the bright side of that supernaturalism which is the mainstay of his system, but Mr. Tyerman showed that all that is good in Catholicism, was taught and practiced by so-called Pagans long before the Roman Church was founded, and that even the forms and ceremonies of that church were principally derived from pagan systems. In his review of the Supernaturalism of Dr. Vaughan, Mr. Tyerman exhibits the unholiness of the alliance proposed by the Archbishop, and exposes the Jesuitical design, underlying the proposition, to make catspaws of the various protestant sects, for the aggrandisement of the Church of Rome.

The concluding portion of the pamphlet is devoted to the education question, contrasting the advantages of secular education, with the injustice and disadvantage of the sectarian system as advocated by Dr. Vaughan.

As an exposé of the sophistical tactics of the Roman Catholic Church, this pamphlet is of more than local interest. The position of the Archbishop and the arguments adduced by him find their counterpart in England and on the Continent, and Mr. Tyerman's clear and rational exposition of their instability and unsoundness, if largely circulated, will do much towards opening the eyes of liberalists, to the insiduous designs of the Roman Catholic Priesthood.

* Hidden Springs Uncovered! Three lectures in reply to Archbishop Vaughan's pamphlet, entitled "Hidden Springs, or, the perils of the future and how to meet them," by J. Tyerman, Sydney, 1876.

TRANCE ADDRESS BY MRS. BAMFORD ON MOUNT ALEXANDER.

Great and joyous is the gathering of spirits to-day, who, in the bright and surrounding harmony, speak to the soul of man with one great force. Ye who have gathered on the mountain top—who have sought the highest pinnacle with true and holy aspirations and desires—may ye ever feel pure in heart and spirit as the breeze now bathing your brows, and realise that unity of heart and soul which now brings us near. This glorious opportunity brings nearer the approaches of our spirits with yours, whose sympathy makes its influence felt by each and all—a something teaching those kindred, joyous, happy feelings, not only through the little community who have met on this occasion, but by the presence of those minds who are directing your feelings in accord with their own, and who seek to demonstrate to those around the advantages of thus passing an hour together. Let these gatherings be many, and each mind will be more attuned. Let them be one of thought and purpose to demonstrate your work, and improve the moral tone of society. We have great pleasure in stating our firm conviction in the future promise of these meetings, inculcating the pure morality of Spiritualism. You should live out nature, and develope mind and thought, which will perpetually give you more elevated views, greater intellect, and more spirituality, indeed. What we mean is, that you shall seek that perfection of mind which teaches you the source from whence you are—that teaches you that this life is only progressive to a better one—that leads on to a never-ending happiness, and makes you nobler in intellect and greater in mind. Listen, then, to the voice of one who comes to all, and implants in your minds a desire to teach something for good.

MRS. ADAMS (Entranced).

It is with much pleasure we have met you here on the mountain-top,—one of your great attractions. We often wish more would meet on such occasions—not only for the grandeur of the scenery, but for the purity of the air, so that we could more easily approach you with spiritual comfort and ministrations. We ask you to let this meeting be—not according to the old idea, a transfiguration on the mount, but a transfiguration of an elevated train of thought—to lead you on to a nearer approach to the Almighty Creator of all things, from man down to the simplest flower that grows. The more calm the mind of man is, the more easily is the soul spiritually influenced under God, our guide and protector, who gives us succor and support when we need it. I say to each one, as you are on the mountain look around you and admire the works of nature, and ask man where is his boasted power, when he thinks himself great—ye are as little children. Look around ye on the mount, or the simple truthful little flower trampled under foot! It is the work of God. In the lovely path, the flower, the tree,—each one is an earnest study, and many lessons might be learned from each if taken for a subject! I would discourse longer, but cannot, owing to imperfect conditions of my medium; therefore, friends, with fond and hearty greetings to those gathered here to-day, we hope, together, you will carry out the work you have undertaken, and by your help, we will assist you in all your undertakings. Farewell.

FREE THOUGHTS ON THE LIFE OF JESUS.

By a Writing Medium.

Chapter II.

(Continued.)

By far the greatest interest, in a general way, gathers around Jesus as a resident of Capernaum. He appears to have made this his head-quarters for a considerable period. And, around the Lake of Galilee and the adjacent country, his footsteps may be traced, the echo of his utterances heard, and the influence of his teaching and example perceived. Nature, in all her ramifications, appears to have had a wonderful charm for him. Hence, it was, he drew his beautiful illustrations. And no wonder, for all harmonious souls sustain with surrounding nature a sympathy. It is in this quarter such persons as Jesus trace the laws of the Infinite One; and, in the order which is here discovered, they will always find arguments for the regulation of their own lives. Jesus was, in this respect, more real than artificial. Art with him had few charms, as compared with nature's revealments; hence, it is, that, on one occasion he declares, speaking of the lilies of the field, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these;-beautiful exhibition of his appreciation of the higher law on the basis of which even Art has to rest its foot, and in strict conformity to which it alone can attain any reputation. It need not, we think, be regretted that Jesus was no scientist. He stands on a higher platform, and lays the foundation for all scientists to build upon, who can, at the best, but follow the intelligent student of nature at a long distance.

Capernaum, the head-quarters of Jesus; strange coincidence, if the inhabitants of that city were so black as they are painted: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell." This utterance conveys a reflection of a very serious character. Failure to recognize advantages bestowed. Nay, more than that, the utter rejection of the light and blessing, which, had it been accepted, would have secured for these persons the highest spiritual distinction. But, as the result of a perverse refusal to accept the boon brought to their very doors, they will now reap, as they had sown, in the blackness of darkness for ever. And not alone Capernaum, but also every community which, in like manner, refuses to accept, and act upon the dicta of the young reformer. These words of his, held up before, and pressed on the notice of men of all nations and generations wherever the words of the Gospel came, and in the hands of the ecclesiastical teacher, are made to tell a sorry tale as against those who, what ever be their circumstances, or their place in the world's history, are found refusing to bow down to the Jewish idol—this idol of gold, which theological hands have wrought and set up for man to worship!

We may, however, take another view of the question: supposing Jesus uttered these words, there are circumstances which need to be considered, and which materially alter the aspect of the denunciation. In the first place, Jesus, full of enthusiasm, doubtless felt called upon to charge these Jews, his fellow-countrymen, with a want of spiritual life. Hankering as they were after temporal power, the establishment of an earthly kingdom in their midst, and a mere formal and lifeless ritual, they had failed to realise the higher spiritual life which he felt moving within his spirit. No words of his had availed to awaken them; no authority which he could claim would lead them to bow in submission. Hence, that earnest spirit of the true reformer which he possessed, rose above the otherwise gentle disposition which he claimed, and vented not words of pity, but fierce denunciation, the meaning of which it is doubtful if he understood himself.

But, again, when we reflect that so many ages have passed away since the time when these words are said to have been uttered, and also the many channels through which they have come to us, can we be surprised if the meaning intended to be conveyed has been lost altogether? It is very true, as a modern writer has remarked, that we see the utterances of Jesus, and receive the doctrines which he is supposed to have taught, not as he represented them, but as they have been formulated by Greek, Latin, and modern theologians; and, when this is considered, it becomes to us the greatest argument against the assumption of a dogmatic spirit respecting what Jesus did, and did not mean to convey to us in the teachings he gave forth.

In the utterance before us, there is also one other thing to be considered, and at which we have already hinted. The mind of Jesus in its formation, partook largely of the theological views of his day, and when he speaks of heaven and hell—even granting that he would place the same construction on these terms as the theologians of the present day do—it is quite certain that his views would not stand the scrutiny of modern criticism. The Jewish doctrine of good and evil—and, as based on that, the heaven of happiness and the hell of misery which were to follow the present life—stands but little chance of being substantiated when we come to see, in the full blaze of bright day, the fact which Jesus and his so-called apostles occasionally impressed on their followers, viz., that God is Love.

It does not, however, derogate from the interest which we ought to feel in Jesus, or tarnish the beauty of his character, to know that, like all other men, he was the creature of circumstances; and that, consequently, there were times and seasons in his ministry when he appears to have lost the harmonious ring of a heaven-born spirit, and descended to the lower plane of less developed minds.

But from this apparent digression we must return. The work of Jesus, taken as a whole, was marked by features which indicated the possession of God-like principles. In the influence which he exerted on his companions, and in the basis which he laid down for the erection of a spiritual life, we find in him, confessed by ages and generations, one sent of God, a friend whose acquaintance was worth having; and, although wanting in some things, wonderfully perfect in others.

It is probable that either at Capernaum or in its vicinity, he formed those connections which continued until his death. The Evangelistic narratives profess to give some information on this part of his history. But it matters little to us, whether at the sea-side, in the more busy town, or by the highway, he met with men and women who feeling some sympathy with his movements, were induced to acknowledge his superiority. It is not at all incredible that both men and women of this class, should be found ready at a moment's notice to leave their occupation and follow Jesus. The deep inward feeling which prevailed at this time respecting the coming of a Messiah, although a very different one from what Jesus proved to be, would prepare the way in many minds to accept him as their leader.

Tradition informs us of the many tender ties which bound Jesus to his friends, and intimates that these ties in some instances would have been of a much closer nature, had not the contracting influence of Essenianism prevailed in leading him to avoid the entanglements of social life. Not, however, that we are prepared to believe that all the intercourse of Jesus with his friends was of the most harmonious character. How could it be with his positive and absolute declarations, and at times severe demands overriding even nature's law! And, moreover, when it is remembered that between the teacher and taught, there must ever exist the idiosyncracies of individualism, fatal would it have been to the future progress and well-being of the race, if the friends of Jesus had blindly accepted all that he taught and urged upon them. It becomes us, in this review of the probable history of Jesus, to distinguish between the divine and the divine-human; that is, between heaven's laws pure and simple, the grand absolute religion of the universe, and the aspect under which these laws are presented to us, as the result of personal conception and hereditary bias. Keeping this fact in view, we shall, while we admire and respect Jesus as an individual, try his teaching by the same rule which is to govern us in all our proceedings as rational creatures. Indeed, Jesus himself lays down that principle in one of his beautiful utterances, probably given forth at or near Capernaum (Matthew xiii. 47, 48). "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." In this utterance he clearly indicates the rule by which we should be guided in our dealings with all kinds of information, whether

offered by himself or any other teacher of men. There is a sense in which some information is not adapted to minister to the well-being of man, taken as an individual; and there are, also, other items of information which may be accepted and used to purpose. But without applying this principle to its universal adaptitude, if we confine it to the teaching of Jesus, as presented to his disciples, we can easily understand in what degree they would, while they accepted some portions thereof, entirely reject others. It must have been so when we consider the very strict adherence which Jesus advocated to certain Essenian doctrines; as, for instance respecting eunuchs, separation from relatives, absolute distribution of property, and a wandering life for the purpose of inducing men to accept views which might not be adapted to their state, or conducive to their growth.

This, however, is an aspect of the life of Jesus which might lead us into an almost endless review. Enough has been said to awaken thought relative to characteristics of his teachings, both in their relation to his friends and the world at large. And, if the course which we have indicated be followed out, results of the most interesting character may be arrived at.

JOTTINGS FROM ADELAIDE.

The Davenport Brothers of whom I spoke in my last communication, brought their visit to this colony to a close a week ago. From the public announcement which Professor Fay made at their farewell performance in Adelaide, and which is reported in one of the daily newspapers, it would appear that their sojourn amongst us has been exceedingly profitable to themselves from a pecuniary point of view, but I regret to say that one of the Brothers was suffering from severe indisposition for a week or two previous to his departure from this province. When the Brothers gave their first *seance* in Melbourne a long account of it appeared in the *Harbinger of Light*, in which it was stated that the manifestations occurring in the presence of the Davenports could be accounted for on no other hypothesis than the Spiritual. I have already expressed my opinion that from the by no means convincing tests afforded to the general public at their *seances* there is nothing to prove indisputably that the manifestations are produced by preterhuman agencies, and in this I am borne out by what Professor Fay is reported to have said on the occasion in question, and which I will cull from one of the daily papers:—

"During the evening Mr Davis, on behalf of the Davenport Brothers and Professor Fay, thanked the people of Adelaide for their patronage, and stated that during ten performances the company had taken about £1,000. Professor Fay, before concluding the performance, stated that the Brothers Davenport and himself made no pretence to supernatural means in the course of their performances (applause), but that what they did was by purely natural means, acquired by long and patient research and years of practice."

The controversy on the subject of Spiritualism which was being carried on in the *Register* at the time when I despatched my last budget of news has been stopped by the editor, who believes that his readers have had enough of it. It is a noteworthy fact, that of all the opponents with whom I had to encounter during the discussion not one returned to the combat after their first appearance in the *Register*. The letters which I wrote in answer to the various objections that were brought forward against Spiritualism created quite a sensation, both in the city and the country. The Adelaide correspondent of the *Kapunda Herald* characterised them as "well written," and the writer as "clear headed" and "deeply convinced." The reception which they met with at the hands of one of our pseudo-comic weeklies, however, was not so encouraging. The editor of the paper in question quoted from one of my letters as it appeared in the *Register* on the *qui bono* aspect of the subject, and considerately assured his readers that "Fitzeric" was ultimately destined to become an inmate of the Adelaide Lunatic Asylum. In addition to this a leading article entitled "Modern Witchcraft" appeared in the *Register* a short time ago, in which the conviction was expressed that had the Spiritualistic sect been in existence in medivæal times most of them would doubtless have found their way to the burning fagots. The stand that it took against Spiritualism was not nearly so antagonistic as one may have expected at the hands of a daily newspaper; indeed it went so far as to say that Spiritualism did not tend to degenerate its adherents; but, on the contrary, manifestly had the effect of making them better men and better women. The same newspaper has also recently favored its readers with some comments in its leading columns on the working and objects of the Melbourne Children's Lyceum, from the pen of a visitor. It spoke very highly of the manner in which the children went through their exercises, of the general good order preserved, and a lucid disquisition held by a lady lecturer present on a somewhat abstruse topic; but the writer of the article despairs of Eclecticism ever becoming the religion of the future.

FITZERIC.

Adelaide, Dec. 19, 1876.

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